

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: SNAR TH
SUBJECT: PRESS INTERVIEW WITH CHANG CHI FU

REF: CHIANG MAI 070

1. BANGKOK WORLD (FEB 14) AND BANGKOK POST (FEB 15) PRINTED ACCOUNTS OF AN INTERVIEW WITH CHUNG SI FU (CHANG CHI-FU), AKA KHUN SA), THE HEAD OF THE SHAN UNITED ARMY. SUBIN KHERNKAW, THE REPORTER WHO INTERVIEWED CHANG AT HIS HEADQUARTERS, APPARENTLY WROTE BOTH ARTICLES. (THE POST AND THE WORLD HAVE THE SAME OWNERSHIP.)

2. IN THE INTERVIEWS, CHANG CHI-FU MAKES THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

- HE (CHANG CHI-FU) IS NOT A DRUG TRADER, BUT MERELY TAXES "MERCHANTS WHO TRAVEL IN MY CONTROLLED ZONES."

- LAST YEAR HE COLLECTED "TAXES" IN THE AMOUNT OF 7.5 MILLION BAHT (NEARLY 400,000 DOLLARS).

- CHANG CHI-FU MET SECRETLY WITH CONGRESSMAN LESTER WOLFF LAST YEAR. CONGRESSMAN WOLFF ASKED CHANG'S ASSISTANCE IN ENDING THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NARCOTICS TRADE.

- OPIUM PRODUCTION COULD BE STOPPED BY A PROGRAM OF CROP SUBSTITUTION. "IF I GET THE COOPERATION OF THE UNITED STATES OR OTHER COUNTRIES I CAN STOP THIS OPIUM BUSINESS."

- HIS ARMY OF 3,000 REGULAR TROOPS AND 8,000 AUXILARY TROOPS

FIGHTS AGAINST THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT (GUB) AND THE BURMESE COMMUNIST PARTY. THIS IS THE REASON FOR THE ARMY'S EXISTENCE.

- LAO SU (A KEY MIDDLE-LEVEL TRAFFICKER CONDEMNED TO DEATH IN ABSENTIA IN THAILAND) IS HIDING IN THE BORDER AREA. THE WORLD ACCOUNT LISTS LAO SU'S LOCATION AS DOI LANG, CHIANG DAO DISTRICT OF CHIANG RAI PROVINCE IN THAILAND, WHILE THE POST STORY PLACES HIM IN "MUANG YONG (MONG-YAWN) IN BURMA, NORTH OF FANG DISTRICT OF CHIANG MAI." (NOTE: THE ILL-DEFINED BORDER AND RUGGED TERRAIN IN THIS AREA MAY ACCOUNT FOR THE DISCREPANCY.) WE HAVE HAD OTHER REPORTS THAT LAO SU IS IN THIS AREA.

COMMENT: THE PICTURE OF CHANG CHI FU AND THE SUA DRAWN BY THESE ARTICLES IS CONSIDERABLY AT VARIANCE WITH THE MISSION'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUA AS THE LARGEST NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATION IN THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE. THE PICTURE IS HOWEVER CONSISTENT WITH THE PROPAGANDA FRIENDS OF THE SUA DOLE OUT, ATTEMPTING TO SHOW THAT THE SUA IS NOT RPT NOT AT ALL AN ORGANIZATION DEALING IN DANGEROUS DRUGS, BUT MERELY A COLLECTION OF REBELS DISENCHANTED WITH THE GUB.
WHITEHOUSE

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